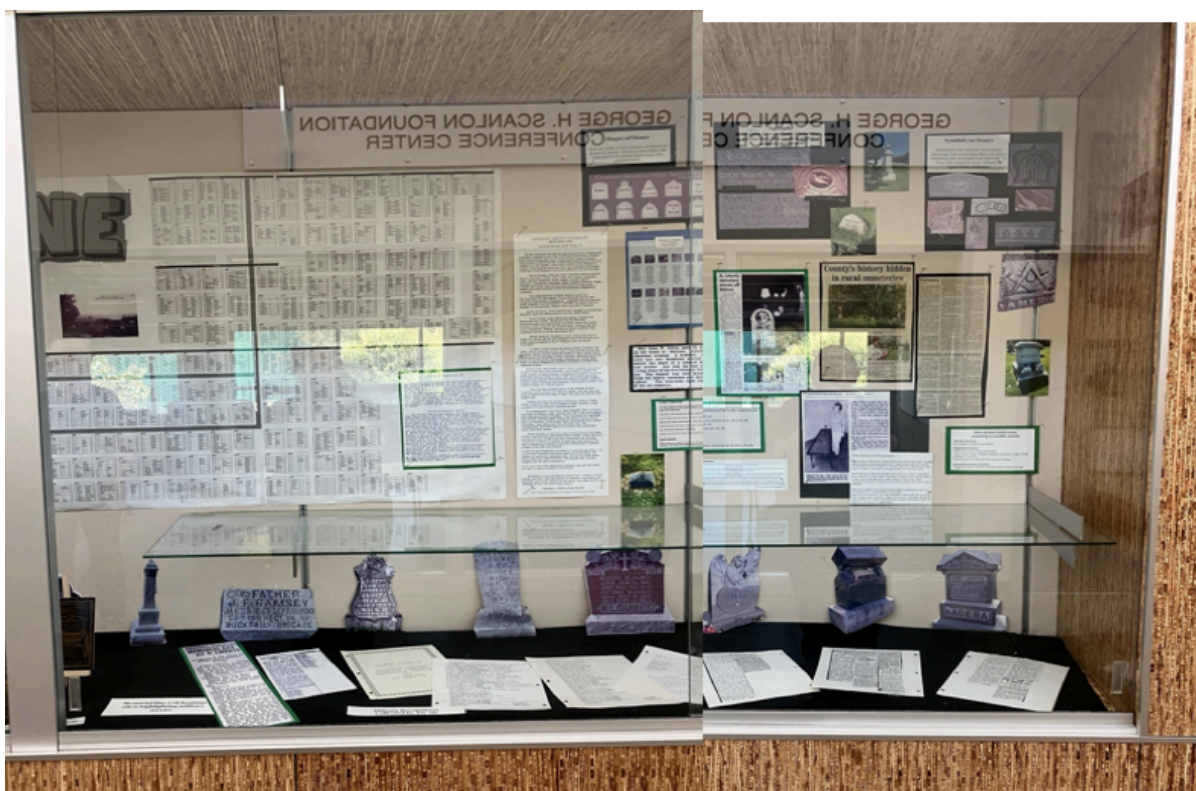
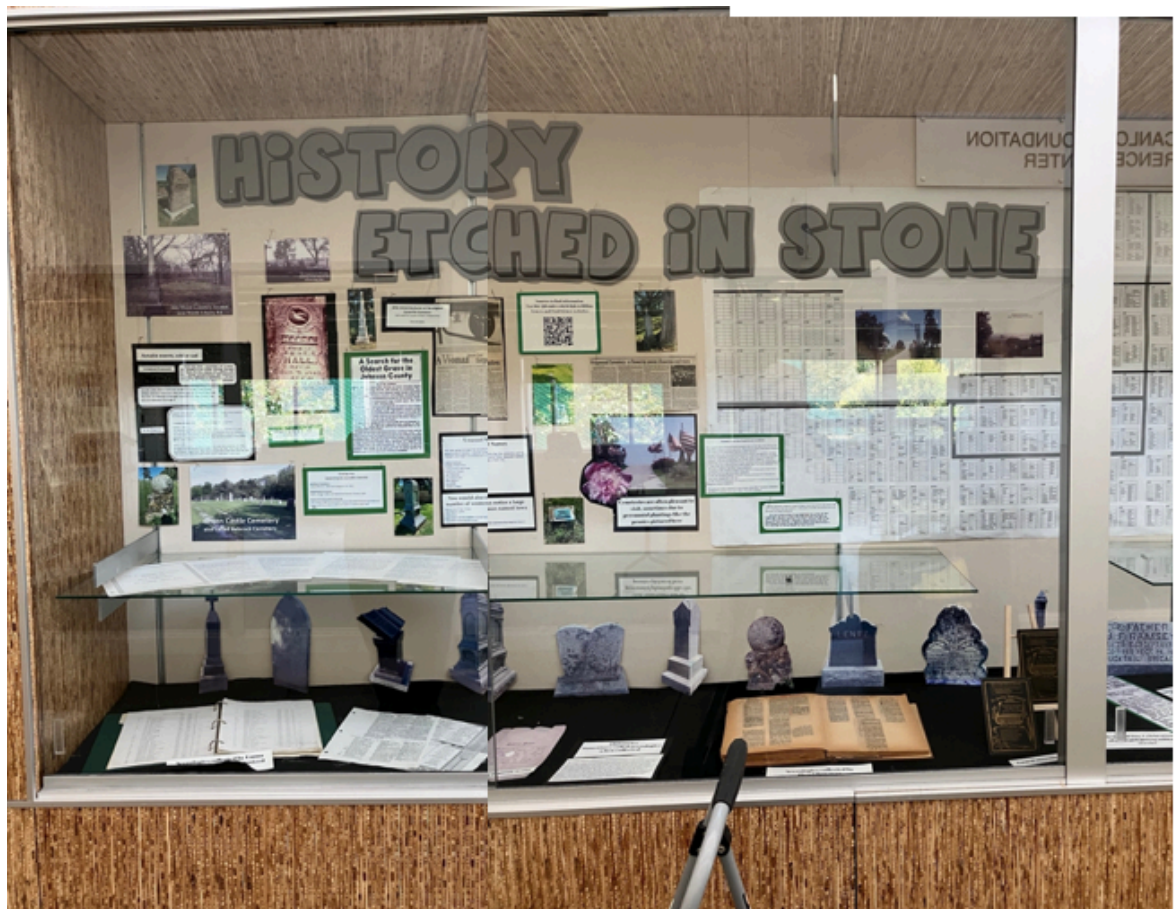


# Notes about local cemeteries used in the Cemetery Display at the North Liberty Library June 2022

Collected by Joan Alt Belknap



## **First burials (according to available records)**

### **Alt/Wein Cemetery**

Louisa Denison 1842 and Margaret Alt 1843

### **Ridgewood Cemetery**

Mary Lininger 1850 and Reverend Michael Snavely 1854

### **Babcock/Greencastle Cemetery**

John Steele 1849 and Elizabeth Gould, Mindwell Babcock and Marium Steele (all three died in 1852 and were 2,3 and 4 years old)

## **Most common family names (according to available records)**

### **Alt/Wein Cemetery**

Alt followed by Moore and Denison

### **Ridgewood Cemetery**

Myers (the most at around 48 names)

Wray, Stoner, Green, Albright, Anderson, Bowman, Lininger, Wolfe  
(between 33 and 20)

Colony (rounds out the top 10 at around 19 names)

### **Babcock/Greencastle Cemetery**

Gould (18), Kadera, Divishek, Babcock, Wolfe and Bystricky (8)

## **Last burial at the Alt Cemetery**

Jennie Saunders – 1927

# Only remaining burial at the original Coralville Cemetery

(still cared for as part of River Products Co.)

Anna M Davis

## Notable events, odd or sad

### At Babcock/Greencastle

There has been somewhat of a sensation caused in our midst during the past few days, by the report of a grave robbery, being committed in the cemetery near Mrs. Babcock's residence. As yet, no clue to the robbery has been obtained.

Iowa City Press-Citizen (Iowa City, Iowa) · 10 May 1899

*Records show that in February of 1881 in the Bystricky family, William died on Valentine's Day at the age of 18, Frank died one day later on February 15 at age 6 and Charles died another day later on February 16 at age 3.*

## At Alt Cemetery

March 6, 1892 (the following diary entries refer to the death of Eliza Kepford and her being buried in the garden because the roads were so bad.)

**Grandma Kepford died at 7 a.m. this morning.** Ma was up there.

March 7, 1892

We went down to the school election. Was a good crowd out was 16. Alt and J.W. Bane was opinions. Jim got hot. I was not there when the voats was counted out but they had a time. I went down to see Earny about sawing. He thought we could saw tomorrow. Went to liberty. We can't saw. **They buried Grandma in the garden till the roads is better.**

April 9, 1892

Went to town this a.m. was home by noon. Got some clover seed for 7.50. **They brought Gramma Kepford down today. Uncle Jo & John, Aunt Ellen & two boys & Walter came down. Mike Snavely hauled the corpse down. Pa, Ma, Em and I went up to the graveyard.** Made a jockey stick when I came home.

## Early Funerals and Preparations

There weren't really many funeral homes as we know them today. Because of the problem of getting around slowly, most people took care of their own deceased family members or used the services of someone like Mrs. Harry A. White. (See article or Irving Weber vol 5 for more info)



Some families would "lay the body out" at their own homes. Sometimes they would have a room which was used for special needs like the birth of a child, or for someone sick or dead. Perhaps it was so the "often unpleasant memories" wouldn't be associated with the rooms they lived in each day.

Many early settlers were buried in home-made wooden boxes, and were not "preserved" by embalming as we do today.

Some families had their own small cemeteries, such as the Alt cemetery. Other people used cemeteries which were privately "operated" like the Wray cemetery. It is likely that some early burials were made in places which are not known or marked today.

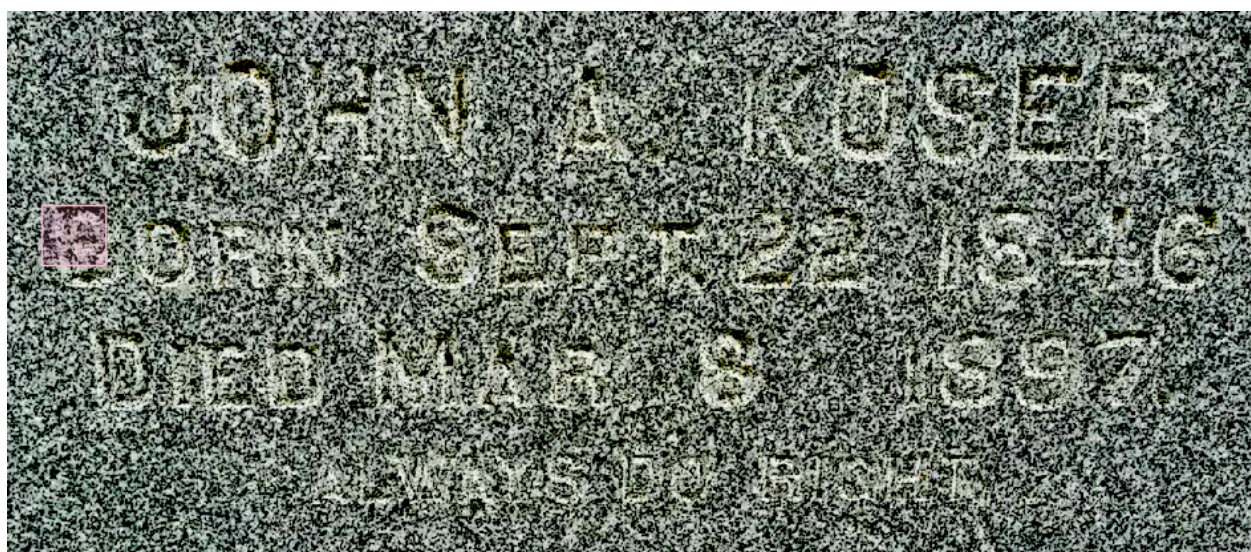
From the memories written by Lide Alt Statler when she was 85 years old in 1928. She is referring to the Alt Cemetery. In the same document, she said the site was previously an indian settlement.

The first burying ground of the neighborhood is on this old farm. A high point runs out, a little creek comes down from the fields on either side, uniting at the foot of the bluff. There is no open road near it and it is entirely at one side of the settlement. Here lie the pioneers of that early day. A beautiful cemetery was laid out later more centrally located on high ground and with an open road passing it. It is well kept up and has already the third addition.

## Excerpt from a flowery obituary-source unknown

*The rooms in the house of mourning were crowded with friends anxious to pay the last tribute to the memory of one whom they esteemed in life. The deceased was encased in a rich casket of black velvet elegantly relieved with silver trimmings, and placed in the center of the parlor. Beautiful floral offerings decorated the casket, which were placed by kindly hands. A cross and basket rested at the foot while wreaths and appropriate emblems were strewn upon the lid. The mortal clay reclined upon the pillow of death as one in a calm, balmy sleep, the face slightly inclined, as if a whisper would cause it to gleam with animation. The body was attired in full dress, the lapel of the coat being decorated with a tastefully arranged button-hole bouquet. The features were natural though blanched. The remains were viewed by a large number of friends.*









# **Symbols on Stones**

Sometimes the symbols have special meanings, but sometimes they just reflect something the deceased was interested in.

They also might be some military or organization affiliation.

## **Epitaphs**

**Often only dates and family relationships, but sometimes other words of wisdom or sayings by the deceased**

### **Sources to find information**

**Use this QR codes which link to Billion Graves and FindAGrave websites**





**Cemeteries are often pleasant to visit, sometimes due to perennnnial plantings like the peonies pictured here**



A good place to see heritage flowers  
is the local cemetery. These peonies are some  
of many at Ridgewood Cemetery on Scales  
Bend Road

## History from the FindAGrave website:

The original part of Ridgewood Cemetery lies on the hill, west of the tool shed. There seems to be no lots here. The graves seem to be more or less in rows. There is no perpetual upkeep on this old part.

The part to the east was owned by David W Wray. He sold 20' x 20' lots. There are 3 additions to this part. These are called the "Hitching Grounds Addition" with lots numbering 1 to 15, the "Wray Addition" with lots numbering 1 to 15, the "David W Wray Addition" with lots numbering 1 to 57. Since then the following have been added the "1st Penn Addition", the "2nd Penn Addition" and the "West Addition".

According to the record on Sep 8 1919, David W Wray gave Penn Twp a quit claim deed for the first three additions.

In 1918, the trustees bought a portion of ground from D.E. Denison on which they platted 20' x 20' lots .

In 1942, one acre of ground was acquired from J.P. Crozier across the road from the present cemetery.

The old part of the cemetery is now being called the "Madison Addition" and there is another new part called "Fox Hill Addition"



## History written by Joe Alt

The North Liberty area has two cemeteries. The historical Alt or Wein cemetery is located two and a half miles east and twenty rods back in a field off the newly named North Liberty Road in Section 17. It is called historical because is the first cemetery in Penn Township. Many of the first settlers and their families are buried there. The first burial was that of Louisa Dennison, the one year old daughter of Alonzo and Maria Dennison, which occurred on November 15, 1842, four years before Iowa became a state in 1846. There were 30 burials there before the Civil War. There are 47 burials in all with the last burial taking place in 1927. These include two Civil War Veterans -- George Norris from Co. E. 28, Iowa Infantry, and Thomas A. Clark of the 6th Infantry, Co. G. He was wounded at Shiloh.

### History of Ridgewood Cemetery

The original part of this cemetery was established in 1849-1850, by James Chamberlin, J.B. Dennison, Elder Snively, Elder Jacob Lininger and others. The first person buried there was Mary Lininger-daughter of Elder Jacob Lininger in 1850. It is located in Section 1, Northwest of North Liberty on Scales Bend road. This part of the cemetery lies west of the tool shed on the hill. Many of the early settlers of Penn and Madison Townships are buried here.

David W. Wray owned land East of the old cemetery. In 1891, 41 years after the first burial ground had been established, he opened up the Wray cemetery, selling 20 x 20 lots for \$10.00. He sold 87 lots. On September 8, 1919 David W. Wray gave Penn Township a quit claim deed for this cemetery. The Penn Township Trustees proceeded to collect \$60.00 from plot owners for perpetual care. In 1918, the Penn Trustees bought a portion of land south of the Wray cemetery from D.E. Dennison. They platted 20 X 20 lots and sold them for \$70.00, with \$60.00 being kept for perpetual upkeep.

The old part of the cemetery was called Penn and Madison burying ground. The part David Wray established was called Wray Cemetery. The addition Penn Township bought from D.E. Dennison was called Penn Cemetery. The cemetery is now called The Ridgewood Cemetery.

In 1942 one acre of ground was acquired from J.P. Crozier. He received two cemetery lots #60 and 61 in Penn Cemetery. The land acquired from Mr. Crozier is located across the road from the present cemetery.